

VWC Position on Hunting

Recognizing that hunting can be an effective management tool and an ethical source of healthful and affordable food, the Vermont Wildlife Coalition (VWC) supports most hunting in Vermont.

In general, we support fair-chase hunting undertaken for legitimate purposes (most specifically, food) and done in a manner that seeks to minimize suffering and trauma to the animal.

Deer hunting exemplifies what we support:

- Ecologically essential due to the extirpation of wolves and mountain lions which preyed on deer over a century ago.
- Provides a healthful food source that can be economically important.
- Has a long history in Vermont as a generally beneficial cultural tradition.

We also support turkey and ruffed grouse (“partridge”) hunting which also provide sustainable and potentially significant food sources, while contributing to the tradition and culture of ethical hunting in Vermont.

We do not oppose hunting of smaller upland game birds, waterfowl, and some small game (e.g., rabbits) if in accordance with the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

We do oppose:

- Treating animal species as vermin and/or with disrespect; including but not limited to killing for entertainment, open seasons, killing contests, and no bag limits.
- Use of dogs except for upland game birds and waterfowl.
- Use of motor vehicles in the pursuit of game.
- Baiting for any species.
- The use of electronic aids to hunting such as but not necessarily limited to game callers. Game cameras, and GPS trackers attached to hounds.

Predators:

Essential to a healthy ecosystem, predators are typically far less abundant than prey species and, therefore, more sensitive to hunting pressure. Moreover, natural feedback mechanisms (territoriality, prey density, habitat requirements, etc.) have effectively restricted their populations for eons so that predators generally do not need human “management.” We believe that predator hunting, even when seemingly sustainable population-wise, should be strictly limited, or eliminated where it serves no legitimate public purpose.